

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application. Please cancel claims 1, 21 and 24, add new claim 42, and amend claims 2, 6, 11, 16, 18, 22 and 23 as set forth below.

1 1. (Cancelled)

1 2. (Presently Amended) A method according to Claim 1 42 wherein the
2 said providing an oxidizing conditions are provided in step (b) by condition comprises
3 heating the solution in the presence of oxygen.

1 3. (Original) A method according to Claim 2 wherein the presence of
2 oxygen is provided by ambient oxygen in the solution.

1 4. (Original) A method according to Claim 2 wherein at least some of
2 the oxygen present is provided by allowing the solution to contact atmospheric air, oxygen or
3 an oxygen-containing gas solution.

1 5. (Original) A method according to Claim 2 wherein at least some of
2 the oxygen present is provided by bubbling oxygen or an oxygen-containing gas mixture
3 through the solution.

1 6. (Presently Amended) A method according to Claim 1 42 wherein the
2 said providing an oxidizing conditions are provided in step (b) by condition comprises
3 combining an oxidizing agent with the solution in the presence of oxygen.

1 7. (Original) A method according to Claim 6 wherein the oxidizing
2 agent is selected from the group of oxidizing agents consisting of a peroxide, a compound
3 containing peroxide, hydrogen peroxide, a periodate, a compound containing periodate,
4 sodium periodate, a diisocyanate compound, a halogen, a compound containing halogen, n-
5 bromosuccinimide, a permanganate, a compound containing permanganate, ozone, a
6 compound containing ozone, chromic acid, sulfuryl chloride, a sulfoxide, a selenoxide, and
7 combinations thereof.

1 8. (Original) A method according to Claim 6 wherein the oxidizing
2 agent is selected from the group of oxidizing agents consisting of a peroxide, a compound
3 containing peroxide, hydrogen peroxide, a periodate, a compound containing periodate,
4 sodium periodate, a diisocyanate compound, a halogen, a compound containing halogen, n-
5 bromosuccinimide, a permanganate, a compound containing permanganate, ozone, a
6 compound containing ozone, chromic acid, sulfuryl chloride, a sulfoxide, a selenoxide, and
7 combinations thereof.

1 9. (Original) A method according to Claim 6 wherein at least some of
2 the oxygen present is provided by allowing the solution-oxidizing agent mixture to contact
3 atmospheric air, oxygen or an oxygen-containing gas mixture.

1 10. (Original) A method according to Claim 6 wherein at least some of
2 the oxygen present is provided by bubbling oxygen or an oxygen-containing gas mixture
3 through the solution.

1 11. (Presently Amended) A method according to Claim 1 42 wherein ~~the~~
2 said providing an oxidizing conditions are provided in step (b) by condition comprises
3 irradiating the solution in the presence of oxygen.

1 12. (Original) A method according to Claim 11 wherein the solution is
2 irradiated by a type of radiation energy selected from the group of alpha ionizing radiation,
3 beta ionizing radiation, ultraviolet radiation, electron beam radiation, gamma rays, and
4 combinations thereof.

1 13. (Original) A method according to Claim 11 wherein the presence of
2 oxygen is provided by ambient oxygen in the solution.

1 14. (Original) A method according to Claim 11 wherein at least some of
2 the oxygen present is provided by allowing the solution to contact atmospheric air, oxygen or
3 an oxygen-containing gas mixture.

1 15. (Original) A method according to Claim 11 wherein at least some of
2 the oxygen present is provided by bubbling oxygen or an oxygen-containing gas mixture
3 through the solution.

1 16. (Presently Amended) A method according to Claim 1 ~~4~~ 42 wherein the
2 solution is flowing.

1 17. (Original) A method according to Claim 16 wherein the flowing of the
2 solution is effected by placing the solution and the tissue in a container, wherein the solution
3 is heated and circulated through the container.

1 18. (Presently Amended) A method according to Claim 1 ~~4~~ 2, wherein ~~step~~
2 ~~(b) comprises the steps of:~~

3 ~~_____ placing the tissue in a solution containing~~ said solution comprises 0.2-
4 2.0 % glutaraldehyde;

5 ~~_____ maintaining the glutaraldehyde solution at~~ and said solution is
6 maintained at 25-70 °C for a period of 0.5-60 days; and,

7 ~~_____ removing the tissue from the glutaraldehyde solution.~~

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1 19. (Original) A method according to Claim 18 wherein the solution has a
2 glutaraldehyde concentration of about 0.625%.

1 20. (Original) A method according to Claim 19 wherein the 0.625%
2 glutaraldehyde solution is maintained at about 45-55 °C for a period of between about 7 and
3 14 days.

1 21. (Cancelled)

1 22. (Presently Amended) A method according to Claim 21 ~~4~~ 42 wherein
2 said chemical fixative agent is glutaraldehyde.

1 23. (Presently Amended) A method according to Claim 21 ~~4~~ 42 wherein
2 said chemical fixative agent is Denacol.

1 24. (Cancelled)

1 25.-41. (Withdrawn)

1 42. (New) A method for chemically treating a biological tissue, wherein
2 said biological tissue comprises connective tissue protein, said method comprising contacting
3 said biological tissue with a solution comprising a chemical fixative agent while providing an
4 oxidizing condition.
